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POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE HADHRAMAUT

HAROLD INGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

131 To the Arab geographers the Hadhramaut is a province of South
114 Arabia, to the west it remained until 1934 an imperfectly explored part of the peninsula with the chiefs of which Great Britain had had treaty relations since the end of the nineteenth century. From 1934 till the present time it has been my good fortune to explore it, to live in it and to be associated with its political development.

631 Politically it consists of six treaty areas, the Qu'aiti State of Shihr and
643 Mukalla, the Kathiri State of Seiyun, the two Wahidi Sultanates of Bir 'Ali and Balhaf and the two tiny sheikhdoms of 'Irqa and Haura. Juridically all these treaty chiefdoms are of the same status, but the premier chief is the Qu'aiti Sultan of Shihr and Mukalla who has the title of Highness and a salute of eleven guns, and after him comes the Kathiri Sultan of Seiyun with a salute of nine guns. Until the nineteenth century the Kathiris had been for some centuries the ruling dynasty of the greater part of the country depending for their power on foreign mercenaries, most of whom were Yafa'i tribesmen from the mountains of the lower Yemen. In course of time these mercenaries became more powerful than the Kathiris and from them arose two dynasties, first of the Kasadis and then, conquering them and much of the Kathiri country, the Qu'aitis.

133 The Hadhramaut is essentially a desert region, with a negligible and
132 uncertain rainfall, in which the inhabitants have from a respectable an-
312 tiquity evolved elaborate systems of irrigation to make the most of their limited water and infertile soil, on which they have probably never been able to support themselves. But as the Hadhramis are commercially an
439 enterprising people they have for as far back as we have any certain knowl-
167 edge of them, a matter of rather more than 2,000 years, lived on trade. The ancient Hadhramaut lived on the incense trade: when that went by sea they learnt to emigrate and for centuries now the Hadhramis have gone abroad to earn money in the countries bordering the Red Sea, in East Africa, in India and most of all in the East Indies. One in every three or four Hadhramis is always abroad, generally temporarily for it is always their ambition to return home, and the largest colonies and the largest fortunes are found in the Netherlands East Indies, particularly Java. The community in Singapore is small but wealthy.

721 Until 1937 the principal feature of their life in their own country was chronic internal strife, for despite their ability to amass money abroad from house property, by trade—mainly in piece goods—by money-lending,

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and so on, they were pathetically unable to live in their own country without quarrelling. In 1937 I managed to persuade the warring tribes to try a period of truce and the Qu'aiti and Kathiri Sultans asked for me to be appointed as their adviser. From then on an effort has been made to build up local Governments and an advisory system has been evolved in both those States and in the Wahidi Sultanates.

It is the purpose of this paper to describe the methods used in building up State government and social services in the Hadhramaut and in order to illustrate them I propose to describe their development in the Qu'aiti State. This is by far the biggest area in the country and has the largest revenue. For these reasons more time has been given to it than the other areas and the co-operation of the Sultan and his people has been so complete that considerable progress has been made.

The State covers an area of about 50,000 square miles, divided into five *lines* each with a governor. It has a population of about 200,000 and the capital is the sea port of Mukalla (population today about 25,000), the largest port in South Arabia between Aden and Muscat. The old capital was Shihr, another port some forty miles east of Mukalla, and that is why the Sultan includes the name in his title. The present ruler is His Highness Sultan Sir Salih bin Ghalib al Qu'aiti, K.C.M.G., who succeeded in 1936.

Status of Great Britain in the Hadhramaut

Until 1937 British relations with the Qu'aiti State depended on a treaty of 1888 in which the British Government extended to Mukalla and Shihr and their dependencies the gracious favour and protection of Her Majesty the Queen Empress. In return for this the rulers undertook to refrain from entering into any relations with any foreign Power except with the sanction of the British Government, and to give notice of the attempt by any other Power to interfere with the country. In 1937 I negotiated a treaty with the Sultan by which His Majesty's Government agreed to appoint a resident adviser to the Sultan and the Sultan agreed, for the welfare of his State, to accept this advice in all matters except those concerning Muhammadan religion and custom. This treaty was based on those entered into with rulers of Malay States, and when Sir Bernard Reilly signed the treaty on Friday, August 13, 1937, he addressed to the Sultan a Note referring to the treaties with the Malay rulers. This Note explained first of all that it was by no means the intention of His Majesty's Government to reduce the powers of the Sultan to insignificance, and made it clear that the treaty would be worked in the same way as similar treaties with Malay rulers. It went on to say there had been very few cases of material disagreement between the ruler and the adviser in Malaya and that the advice to be given to His Highness in all matters of internal concern would be based solely on the adviser's view of the interests of the State and of His Highness. It had been the policy of His Majesty's Government, the Note said, to maintain the authority of the ruler in all such matters. It said that in foreign affairs the case was somewhat different because by

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648 treaty and the force of circumstances the Sultan was already bound to follow the protecting Power. It ended up by saying that if there were serious disagreement between the Sultan and the adviser it would be open to the Sultan to appeal to the Governor of Aden and if necessary to the Secretary of State.

This new departure of giving an adviser to a ruler in Arabia was not really a great innovation. Lawrence describes the policy agreed on for Arabia after the last war as putting a "ring-wall around Arabia, a country which must be reserved as an area of Arabian individualism. So long as our fleet keeps its coasts, Arabia should be at leisure to fight out its own complex and fatal destiny."[1] The old treaty of protection represented just such a policy as Lawrence described. There was at that time, of course, no question of providing advisers in Arabia itself, but in *A Report on the Reconstruction of Arabia*, also by Lawrence, he wrote that any advisers chosen by Feisal "will be part of the Arab Government and will draw their executive authority from it and not from their own Government."[2]

In my case there was some discussion as to who should pay for the adviser, but as a gesture to a country which had at that time no money the British Government decided to pay. But I think it will be clear from the treaty and the Note accompanying it that it was intended that the adviser should work things out with the local government himself and that he should not be a mouthpiece to convey instructions from His Majesty's Government to the local ruler as to what was to be done. So that what was done is in harmony with what Lawrence wrote and that has been the way in which I have tried to work.

There is one other instrument to which I must refer and that is the Protectorate Order-in-Council of 1937. It was thought by some at the time that this Order-in-Council amounted to an annexation of the Protectorate, but the then Prime Minister in an answer in the House of Commons on June 1, 1938, denying that the Order-in-Council provided for an annexation of territory, said that when Aden became a colony, jurisdiction in the adjacent areas, hitherto exercised under the Indian (Foreign Jurisdiction) Order-in-Council, had to be provided by a new Order-in-Council and that this was a normal administrative change. It did not therefore portend our administering the Protectorate or destroying the autonomy and responsibility of the chiefs.

Comparison of State Government in Hadhramaut in 1934-6 and 1944

647 In 1934 the Sultan's staff in Mukalla consisted of a Wazir, a treasurer, a commander of the forces, a doctor, and a few school-masters. In 1944 there was a State Council of senior officials and nominated unofficials, and the administration was carried on in twenty organized departments under

113 [1] Robert Graves, *Lawrence and the Arabs* (London, Cape, 1927), p. 396, also *T. E. Lawrence by his friends* edited by A. W. Lawrence (London, Cape, 1937), p. 198.
[2] David Garnett (ed.), *The Letters of T. E. Lawrence of Arabia* (London, Cape, 1938), p. 288.

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the general control of the State Secretary, an Omani Arab borrowed from the Tanganyika Government. Apart from him there were eighteen other non-Hadhrami Arabs and Indians in the administration, mostly doctors, technicians and military officers.

In 1934 on the best figures available the revenue was about Rs. 630,000. For 1944-5 it was estimated at just under Rs. 15,000,000. In 1934 the amount spent on Government services was about 3,010,000 of which 2,025,000 went to Yafa'i Irregulars and slaves. In 1944-5 the expenditure was estimated at just under Rs. 16,000,000. In 1934 the then Sultan put about half the revenue in his pocket and, just before he left for India for the last time before he died, he emptied the till and left the treasurer to borrow from the merchants, so when the first check of Government cash was made on April 1, 1939, there was still a deficit of about Rs. 40,000. On April 1, 1944, there was a credit of over Rs. 14,000,000.

Up to the end of 1936 insecurity was rife all over the country. No one could travel safely without an escort from the tribe through whose territory he moved. In the settled areas many villages were at war with neighbouring villages. In some cases there were elaborate trench systems both for defence and for communication with the fields. It was estimated that the sudden death-rate in the principal part of the Wadi Hadhramaut alone was ten a month. Even the unarmed classes were not infrequently murdered. The worst area was Kathiri Territory, but there were others almost as bad in areas under Qu'aiti influence. The Qu'aiti security forces were really only effective for keeping the bedouins out of the main Qu'aiti towns. They would not have been really effective there if it had not been for humiliating agreements which the Sultan had made with the bedouins that they would not raid within short distances of the towns marked with white boundary posts. The regular forces had been reduced to ceremonial duties only: the power of the State depended on Irregular mercenaries and slaves, and the Sultan was generally at their mercy, his authority depending on being able to play the one off against the other.[1] Early in 1937 a general peace treaty was arranged for three years between all the tribes and tribal sections. To this there were nearly 1,400 signatories which in itself gives an idea of the divided state of the country. In the same year we began the reorganization of the regular forces. In 1940 the truce ran out: an extension for ten years was proclaimed and for the most part loyally adhered to, but a good deal of tribal trouble recurred and the local forces were not yet sufficient in numbers or skill to keep order everywhere. Trouble gradually lessened and in 1944 the Qu'aiti State was paying over four lakhs of rupees for armed and police forces which on the whole kept order and peace very well. Incidents during 1944 were very few.

The bedouin today has a real confidence in the Qu'aiti Government.

[1] About the last official trace of slavery disappeared in 1944 when the State slaves were freed. Many of them were enlisted in a new African Company and the old ones were pensioned off.

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He is no longer apt to be shot at by Government soldiers and he brings his troubles to the Government. The provincial governors and the district heads are better men and better paid than they used to be and all new candidates have courses of instruction before appointment. There are systems of State and tribal courts which are becoming more and more effective. There is a special department of bedouin affairs which is staffed entirely by Hadhrami tribesmen; five or six years ago no Hadhrami tribesmen were employed in any positions of responsibility.

As regards social services, in 1934 there was one doctor, mainly for the Sultan though he ran a public dispensary, and medical services cost Rs. 5,500 a year: in 1944 the sum voted was Rs. 74,000 for medical and sanitary services. There was an establishment of four doctors, and a State hospital for fifty in-patients was being built in Mukalla.

In 1934 education cost Rs. 6,000 and about three hundred boys received some sort of schooling. In 1944 Rs. 1,054,000 was provided. The number of boys in primary Government schools on the coast has increased to about seventeen hundred. There were between a hundred and thirty and a hundred and forty girls in the new Mukalla girls' school, and an intermediate boarding school, assisted by the British Council and a grant from His Majesty's Government, had been started with about eighty boys. As part of the famine relief measures, children were brought down from the Hadhramaut and have now been taken over by the Qu'aiti State which bought a village outside Mukalla and is now housing three hundred boys and girls in it. A wall enclosing garden land has been built round it and the children work the garden and are apprenticed to various local trades. They are given a modest schooling and it is hoped that they will also be taught by means of a village council to run their own village.

Another State educational experiment owes its impetus mainly to the enthusiasm of the young men of Mukalla. A number of young men have gone through a course organized by the Education Department in how to teach illiterate adults to read and write. These teachers compiled a coolies' vocabulary of seven hundred words or so and when I left were about to teach coolies from the Hadhramaut, who had come seeking for work at the coast on account of the famine, how to write the language they speak, a sort of basic Arabic. There are schemes for producing a small newspaper in this simplified form of speech and for developing some public-health consciousness.

What little the State could do towards the war effort it has done. It provided a company for guard duties in Aden while the Italians were in the war. It has raised a Pioneer Company for service in the Middle East Command. It has guarded the R.A.F. aerodromes in the State and provided coastal guards. The Public Works Department has built an R.A.F. station at about a third of the cost expected. It has landed and handled a great quantity of R.A.F. stores. In addition, at the outbreak of war when the surplus balance was about Rs. 80,000, it contributed Rs. 20,000 for general war purposes, and Hadhramis at home and abroad subscribed to a

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Hurricane fighter and a mobile canteen for blitzed areas in England. The women of Mukalla have made bandages for the Red Cross in Egypt regularly since 1942.

That is a brief comparison between the Qu'aiti State in 1936 and in 1944: and progress has been made in other ways too. In case the picture seems too favourable, it should be remembered that the famine, due to the loss of over £600,000 a year in remittances from Singapore and Java, seven years' drought, the difficulty of getting food and its high price, the loss of 50 per cent of the working camels, and the difficulties of shipping, has had a very grave effect on the country, but has on the whole hit the interior rather than the coast. His Majesty's Government came to the rescue by voting over £300,000 for famine relief, and by providing air transport for grain, but in dealing with the progress of the Qu'aiti State it is right to record that the Government and the merchants have done their best, and the 1944 estimates included about three lakhs of rupees for famine relief, both by direct grants and by the provision of public works. A voluntary cess by merchants on their imports, the contribution by Government servants of 1 per cent of their salaries, and other charitable efforts raised a fair amount more; and soup-kitchens, infirmaries and so on were provided at the coast for refugees from the interior.

Nature of the People and Country

Before describing the methods used in building up the Qu'aiti administration, something must be said about the nature of the people and their country to explain why unusual methods were required. The Hadhramaut is in many ways different from the rest of Arabia, from which it is for the most part separated by desert on all sides, but since it has a seaboard its people have always been able to find a living across the sea. They have had to do this because most of the 70,000 odd square miles of the country is irreclaimable desert and it is unlikely that it could ever support more than a quarter of the population. In other lands they have come to know Western rule but for the most part it has had few attractions for them. They generally find the trammels of an ordered life irksome, and throw them aside as happily as they drop their tarbushes and tussore suits for a waist cloth and indigo when they come back.

The nature of the country provides an explanation of the nature of the people. The vast and barren areas of mountain and jol have bred in the bedouin a deep sense of freedom and an unwillingness to yield it to anyone, for it is all he possesses. In the deep valleys of the hinterland the horizon is bounded by walls a thousand feet high and this has bred in the people an exclusiveness which it would be hard to find elsewhere. In the towns and villages of these valleys a most particular form of religion has grown up. There is none of the free brotherhood of Islam, but a system of classes of seiyids, of settled tribesmen with few of the virtues of the desert bedouin, of money-lending immigrant Wafa'i tribesmen from the west, of descendants of African slaves, of merchant townsmen, and of hard working

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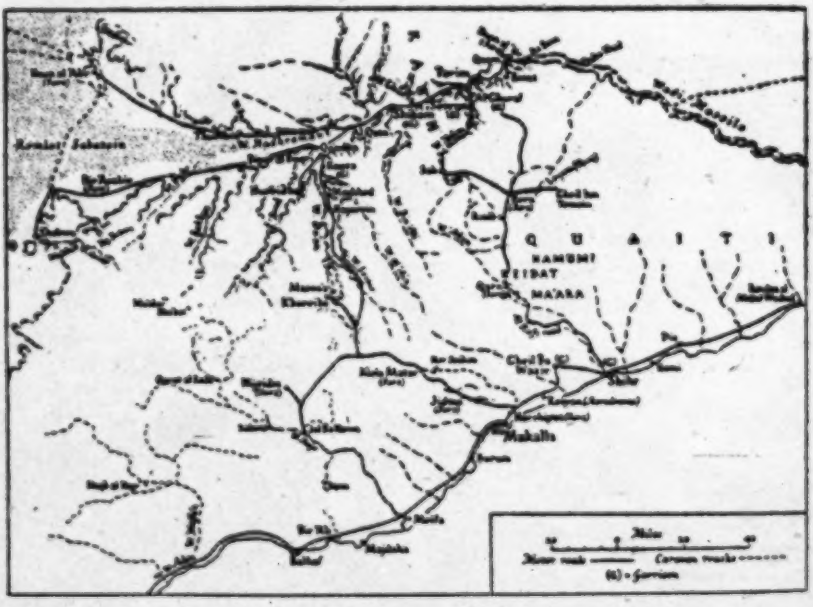
serfs whose economic condition is so oppressive that they have almost fallen to the level of the beasts whose labours they share on their wells. The seiyids dominate the life and thought of the country and, though some of them, those with whom the Westerner comes into contact, have furnished their houses with most of the comforts, many of the luxuries and still more of the barbarities of the West, Western influence ceases at that point and they have been described as "members of the most fanatical sect in Arabia." There are over 20,000 of them in the country and with their families they probably represent about a fifth of the population. The Hadhramaut is also a particular and holy land for it contains the tomb of the prophet Hud and a whole host of minor prophets and saints.



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The country contains the most extraordinary contrasts. Civilization ranges from extremes of luxury and comfort to utter squalor, from considerable culture to complete savagery. The poor town classes usually have enough to eat but no margin, the bedouins live on the verge of starvation. You find the highest standard of morality among the bedouin, but in the towns and especially on the coast vice is all too common: theft, however, is surprisingly rare. Formal religious observance among the settled people is widespread but there are few "good" men. Those there are stand out like beacons. Among the bedouin there is less formal observance (some tribes scarcely pray or fast) but a higher standard of honour

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and the people are natural Muslims having learnt in a hard school absolute submission to the will of God. Religious fanaticism is strongest where the seiyids are strongest. In other places there is greater tolerance and, among the bedouins, it is what a man is rather than what his religion is that counts.

When we started everybody wanted independence. Many of the old secluded seiyids, whose ideas of independence merely amounted to the exclusion of infidels, had sons and relations who read the Egyptian papers and their ideas of independence were based on grandiose schemes of complete self-government. Some of them, who thought themselves moderate, demanded no more than independence on the Egyptian and Iraqi models and talked airily of Parliaments and so on. In Singapore and Java in 1939 I had petitions presented to me three times demanding this sort of independence. Once at Solo the deputation was pointed out to me as representative: it contained seiyids, tribesmen and a Sultan of the Kathiri family. Only the last had ever been in the Hadhramaut. He asked me if he might see me privately after the meeting and then asked me to arrange independence for Jahiz. Jahiz was his village in the Wadi 'Amd and consists of five houses. The tribesmen, settled and bedouin, wanted independence; the bedouin claim was at least easy to understand for all it amounted to was that their freedom in the hills and deserts should be undisturbed. The settled tribesmen were and are more difficult. Every little section considered itself independent, and the more powerful, who could afford not only to arm themselves but to buy and arm private forces of slaves, did all they could to extend their boundaries at the expense of their neighbours.

The strangest example of this kind of campaign was that of the Bin 'Abdat section of the Kathiri tribe, who own much landed property in Singapore and Java. The treaty chief of the Kathiris is the Kathiri Sultan whose capital is Seiyun. About 1928 the head of the Bin 'Abdat section forcibly occupied the walled town of Al Ghurfa, belonging to some unarmed sheikhs. This brought him into conflict with the Kathiri Sultan, who was supported by the Qu'aiti Sultan, and with the neighbouring heads of other Kathiri sections. War ensued which carried on with little interruption till 1937. Bin 'Abdat built up a respectable force of slaves and tribesmen of his own and constructed an elaborate system of forts and trenches which extended right across the Wadi Hadhramaut some three miles or more, and almost to the Qu'aiti-Kathiri boundary at Shibam. In the course of the fighting, a curious armoured vehicle was imported from Java, which was intended to be towed by a motor car into the enemy camp. Bin 'Abdat acquired a very large stock of ammunition and really good rifles at very high prices. The Qu'aiti Sultan brought artillery, ancient and modern, to the aid of the Kathiri, but no decision was ever reached.

When I came to the Hadhramaut in 1936 Bin 'Abdat instructed his lawyer in Singapore to address a letter to the Government in which he claimed to be an "independent rajah." He was informed that the only recognized treaty chiefs in the main Hadhramaut were the Qu'aiti and

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669 Kathiri Sultans and that he was the recognized head of a Kathiri section
648 subordinate to the latter. In 1937 after a lot of persuasion he subscribed to the three years truce. This chief loyally kept the peace and helped in maintaining peace till his death early in 1939, when he was succeeded by an irresponsible nephew who after visiting Java and Singapore to collect his inheritance, returned to Hadhramaut determined to extend his boundaries and influence.

In 1939 my wife and I also visited the East Indies and while in Batavia were entertained by the Bin 'Abdat family at a tea and cocktail party at the Hôtel des Galleries, a large modern hotel belonging to the family. Round the walls of the room in which the reception was held were pictures of Al Ghurfa labelled "Al Ghurfa in the Hadhramaut over which this family has fought so long."

Late in 1939 the new Bin 'Abdat started fresh operations. He extended his fortifications and subsidized a large bedouin tribe, the Hamumis, amongst whom the Government was trying to make peace, to make the then one motor road unsafe and to oppose the Government in every possible way. A good deal of fighting ensued in which both the Hamumis and the Qu'aiti troops had casualties. He also brought Hamumi bedouins as his soldiers into the Wadi Hadhramaut itself where they made the road unsafe for travellers. He arrested and maltreated persons who had recourse to the Sultan in their troubles. The Sultans were supported by His Majesty's Government and action was taken against him. He submitted in May 1940, but did not observe the condition he had accepted and until the fall of Singapore and Java eventually caused his funds to dry up, was always a source of trouble. For it was the profits of the hotel and rents of his properties in the Far East which had enabled the family to keep their wars going. Many Hadhrami chiefs did the same thing, but none on the
627 Bin 'Abdat scale. And when litigants in Java lost their cases in the Java Courts it was not unusual for them to repay their opponents in the Hadhramaut by having their families shot or their homes burnt.

631 There were supposed to be only two Governments in Hadhramaut, the
619 Qu'aiti and Kathiri, but in fact there were about two thousand—the fourteen hundred tribes and sections who had signed the truce and several hundreds more of independent villages ruled by mansabs and sheikhs.

185 It was considerations such as these that I had to bear in mind when I thought of the kind of organization which would be most likely to succeed in the Hadhramaut. The only things that seemed to offer a favourable opening were a widespread desire for peace and a genuine anxiety on the part of the Sultan for improvements in Governmental and social services. Apart from these factors I had the instruments I have referred to, and the general indication that one should try to follow as far as possible the methods adopted in the Unfederated Malay States, to guide me in forming an organization.

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Organization of the Residency and Methods Used

After persuading the tribes to make the general truce for three years, I turned my attention to Government organization. I had hoped at first that it would not be necessary to have more than three European assistants, two political and one military, but the burden of work became so heavy that by the beginning of the war I think there were eight European officers working in the Hadhramaut. Owing to the general anti-foreigner feeling I thought it better that these officers should belong to the Residency staff as assistants to the adviser and that they should not have executive authority, and I told them to regard themselves rather as men with oil cans, who saw that the machinery was working, than as part of the machinery itself. Furthermore I felt sure that the actual responsibility must remain in the hands of the local Government. I believed, and I am sure that events have proved me right, that if you give people responsibility and make them exercise it they are eventually able to do so fairly effectively. You begin by collecting a group of what are in effect pictures labelled as heads of departments and in due course they come, like Galatea, to life. This rather extensive employment of Europeans did not turn out very successfully and, in 1942, it was approved that I might reduce my European assistants to two and engage trained orientals to instruct the local Government staff in the conduct of bedouin affairs, district administration, finance, medical, educational, agricultural, military and police work. Not all these posts have yet been filled owing to the difficulty of finding qualified candidates but there are now Transjordanis holding the posts of Bedouin Affairs Assistant and Police Assistant, a Hadhrami seiyid who is a Major in the Hyderabad military forces and a Punjabi Mussulman as Military Assistants, and a Sudani as Educational Assistant.

The functions of the Residency are advice, instruction and inspection. As regards instruction the Residency runs a military school which is attended by officers and non-commissioned officers of all the forces, and promotion in the forces cannot be had without a certificate from it. It runs courses for teachers, courses for administrative candidates for employment as district officers, and police courses. Other courses are obtained by sending candidates to Aden, for example for training as dispensers, and by sending boys for education to the Sudan.

Most Government departments were in their beginning practically directed by Residency staff. When they are able to stand sufficiently on their own feet, the Residency withdraws and leaves them entirely to their own heads and the State Secretary.

Some things, however, are paid for by His Majesty's Government and are under Residency control. The most important of these is the Hadhrami Bedouin Legion. It is modelled as far as possible on Brigadier Glubb's Desert Patrol, which he kindly enabled me to see in 1938, and he generously provided Arab officers for it. The bedouins were quite unaccustomed to any sort of military service and the force experienced ups and downs for

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701 the first two or three years. It has its headquarters at Mukalla and posts
702 in most of the more important bedouin areas. Service in it is now very popular and almost all tribes are represented. Its members are trained not only as soldiers but also as settlers of disputes by pacific means. The
[743] force runs, with Mukalla Government assistance, a small military hospital which is the first hospital to have been established in the Hadhramaut and serves all the forces. To promote bedouin education and bedouin agriculture and to control locusts, it has enlisted teachers and agricultural soldiers, and they are almost all young seiyids of good family who hitherto had thought it quite unheard of to do any work. They were enlisted as ordinary soldiers and went through some military training without arms but had to do all the ordinary fatigues such as digging and road making.
87√ The teachers were given a teachers' training course and they now operate
758 an admirable boarding school for a hundred bedouin boys; district schools
731 have also been started at some of the outposts. The teachers have dispensary courses at Aden so that in an elementary way medical assistance
657 and education are now available in bedouin districts. At some of these places the teachers also run grain shops for famine relief, where Government grain is sold at cost price to bedouins.

671 A good start had also been made with a bedouin girls' boarding school.
759 A few bedouin women are already proving successful as nursing assistants and I hope that some of these girls will afterwards become nurses and teachers.

000 So much for the Residency organization. The object has been to help the State to become effective in its government and to make the best use it can of its resources. I have always tried to look at things from the point of view of the State only, in the way that the treaty, as explained in the Note, required. But in view of the exclusive nature of the people I have in addition always worked as if I were one of them. I have, at their
[273] request, worn their clothes: as it is illegal to possess alcohol in the Hadhramaut, my house has always been "dry" and we have, outside the privacy of our own quarters, always lived as the country lives. I am sure that it is because of working and living as a part of the people that we have been able to do as much as we have. What I have done on my own initiative has not been questioned because it has not been felt that it was done by a foreigner or for a foreign Government.

609 As a Christian I had at first difficulty in finding acceptance by a com-
771 munity which feels it almost impossible to understand even the existence
648 of Christian Arabs. In various parts of the country the objection was always brought up that the signing of treaties providing for advisers would mean the introduction of missionaries and the building of churches. I have always told them that missionaries would not be forced on them, and I have further said that these States were recognized as Muslim Arab States and that, as a member of an Arab Muslim Government, I felt it my
000 duty to support the State religion. Personally, although I cannot claim any particular orthodoxy in religion, I find inspiration for my work in the

faith in which I was brought up, but when, in such a position as I have held, I have to deal with people of another faith, I feel it is essential to help and encourage them to live up to the best in their own faith, for a live religious spirit is a vital necessity to all progress. The Hadhramaut is sadly afflicted, as I have said, by over-emphasis on formalism, but I have found great support in pressing more and more the necessity of working and living in the spirit of religion. This type of teaching is employed in educating troops and boys and girls in the new schools, particularly in the children's village and in the bedouin boys' and girls' schools. My educational assistant has a candidate for training as a teacher of the spirit of religion, leaving the other teachers to teach, for example, the methods of prayer and fasting. In the course of time it has been generally accepted that the position of religion in the affairs of the country is being strengthened and not weakened.

TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS FROM EXPERIENCE IN THE HADHRAMAUT

As I spent the first fifteen years of my service in Zanzibar and Mauritius and have had opportunities of studying the administration of East Africa, Malaya and the West Indies, whether on the spot or in the Colonial Office, it is natural for me to approach consideration of the best way to help backward areas in the Middle East, like the Hadhramaut, to more effective self government, by comparison with the better known colonial methods of approach to the same goal.

It seems to me that if success is ultimately achieved in teaching the people of such areas to govern themselves it will probably not be by the traditional methods of colonial administration. The practical difficulties of doing so seem to be due to the nature of the country, to the nature of the people and to political considerations. The country is mainly desert and our colonial tradition has been built up in lands capable of economic development. Owing to their environment the people, taking them as a whole, are neither simple nor tractable and, by contrast with most peoples of tropical dependencies, they are suspicious of outside interference. As the close control of any part of Arabia is looked on with dislike by other parts of Arabia and as there is, as far as I can see, no over-riding necessity for us to control such an area as the Hadhramaut closely, it does not on political grounds seem worth while to do so. The less we interfere with the internal

000 affairs of Arabia, and the more we can give assistance, including financial assistance, without giving rise to fears of annexation or virtual annexation, the more popular we shall be.

648 Some time ago I was telling some of the principal people of Mukalla of some assistance which His Majesty's Government was proposing to give. They were grateful for it, but there were doubts as to whether all this would lead to closer control and the subject turned to British colonization as they call it. Said one, "the English come to you and say, 'I would like to stay in your house and help you. I will be no bother to you, all I want

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is your friendship and I will pay my way.' A little later on, they say, 'I would like to hang up my hat here, it won't be in your way.' Then they say, 'my coat also.'" Said another, "and then it is their trousers and then they cannot leave." A few months later when the Governor of Aden was telling a meeting in the Hadhramaut of the very generous help His Majesty's Government was offering for famine relief, an address thanking him asked for an assurance that there was not more than charity behind it. This he readily gave, but the point is that the Arabs of South Arabia know well enough what peaceful penetration has meant in the past, in such places as Zanzibar, and they fear us even when we bring gifts.

I do feel, however, that, given the right type of adviser or political officer, it is possible to improve administration, security and social services in such areas by such means as I have described, and I am quite sure that the resultant dividend of good will in the area itself and in neighbouring areas is far greater than you would get by applying the more efficient methods of direct or indirect rule.

Seeing my own successes and failures and watching those of others over the course of years has given me some ideas of what an officer working in these countries should be and do. As Arabs are individualists and will at best only treat you as an equal, a man they feel to be a leader can handle them better than another. So that personality counts for a lot, but it must not be aggressive. Tact, judgment, self-reliance and balance are indispensable, and without patience and hope many a good man might give up. But beyond these things an officer working with such people should not feel and must never show that he is a superior being to those amongst whom he works. They will expect him to have a greater knowledge of outside things than they have, for he would not be there if he had not, but he must be careful how he uses it. In social matters it is not merely a question of having no colour prejudice. Administrative officers of the Colonial Service rarely have colour prejudice in an acute form, but they generally set bounds between themselves and the people in social intercourse. The officer living amongst the Arabs cannot do this, and must be prepared for long periods at a time to live and share the life of the people while at the same time keeping his own virtue and preserving a sense of proportion. The Arabs believe as an article of faith that they are the noblest of races, and it should not be over-looked that they have a civilization and a literature of their own so that it is not for us to impose a culture on them or to build a culture for them. A kindly condescension to a less fortunate race is therefore out of place when dealing with them. They take our so-called insularity not as a peculiarity for which allowances should be made, but as a criticism of them and their manner of life. In this, of course, they are not peculiar. They call our insularity and condescension *kibr inglis*. The French in Mauritius used to call them *orgueil anglais* and they are perhaps the things above all others which make us unpopular.

Simplicity of life and manner are in many circumstances a valuable

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qualification. Pomp and circumstance mean little to a tribesman and nothing at all if they are only window dressing. It is worth while quoting what Tabari says of the Khalif Umar's instructions to governors: "Whenever he appointed a governor he used to draw up in writing a certificate of investiture. It contained the following instructions: That he must not ride on horseback, nor eat white bread, nor wear fine clothes, not set up a door between himself and those who had aught to ask of him."[1]

An officer living in many of these countries must not expect a life of ease and comfort, and he must be ready to do without the sort of things that he considers the ordinary amenities of life, such as games, clubs, European society and its distractions. If he cannot find interest and entertainment in local society and its diversions, he is better elsewhere. The same applies to his wife. Freya Stark once wrote that the British are always popular until they bring their wives. This is exaggerated but there is a great deal of truth in it, and I have often heard the complaint that wives caused the lack of understanding between British officers and their people by keeping their husbands away from the people.

Apart from personal qualities an officer must have not only a knowledge of the language of the country but a knowledge of and sympathy with its religious customs. He must know its history and the more he knows of its literature the better. Without these he cannot speak with the enemy within the gates. Finally, he must have a general grounding of administrative or technical knowledge and experience. When he sees a suitable opening and can get the requisite co-operation he should be in a position to help to put finances on a sound basis, and to help in the development of medical services, education and agriculture. He should be of an inventive turn of mind and should be able to make a little money do the work of a lot. He should be able to make bricks without straws.

I cannot, of course, pretend to speak for any area of which I have not direct experience, but from what I have seen and heard of the rest of the Middle East I have the feeling that it is qualifications of this kind that are needed there also.

It may be to some extent a counsel of perfection to ask for officers of these qualifications, but I find it difficult to believe that candidates with many or all of them and with the necessary missionary spirit cannot be found; and I think there would be a far greater chance of finding them if there were a recognized unified political service from which political officers and advisers could be selected for the various posts which we have or may have to fill in this area. If there were such a service it should be possible to attract better candidates to it as there would be a cadre large enough to offer a reasonable career.

Of course that is not enough by itself to ensure a settled, or at any rate a more settled, Middle East. There is the importance of adequately garrisoning the area (of showing force as Lyautey, often quoted by Brigadier

[1] R. A. Nicholson, *Literary History of the Arabs* (London, Cambridge University Press, 1930).

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Glubb, said in order not to have to use it). In our area we owe a great deal to the R.A.F.; much of the improved security in the Hadhramaut is due to the presence of an R.A.F. station near Mukalla and to the new local forces. The R.A.F. have been particularly good in political work as opposed to punitive work. Not only have they shown the flag regularly, taken the sick to hospital, carried doctors about and, lately, provided a whole flight for the exclusive work of flying grain to famine areas, but in peace-time they have often made friendly social contacts and given and taken hospitality in a spirit which has made them very welcome visitors. I am sure that friendly social intercourse between garrisons abroad and the local population in peace-time, when there is time for it, goes a long way to reduce the possible need for armed intervention. I am not sure how far such contacts are officially encouraged but perhaps more could be done in that way.

My conclusions are:

(1) There is a type of backward territory in the Middle East in which for reasons of climate, soil, nature of population and politics, colonial administration in the usual sense of the word is inapplicable.

(2) That neither of the systems of colonial administration known as direct rule and indirect rule are suitable in such countries as these. Even in indirect rule the person who has the final authority and responsibility in a country is the Governor and under him his provincial and district commissioners. In Arab countries final responsibility must rest with the ruler and his Government, and the adviser must draw his authority from them. The responsibility of the Government supplying the adviser ends with providing the best officer available and withdrawing him if he is not suitable.

(3) That the best way of dealing with these territories is by a system of loose political control and/or advice which is neither direct nor indirect rule nor complete abstention.

(4) That you cannot expect people to act responsibly if you do not give them full responsibility. In countries that are as hard as the Hadhramaut and have as few economic resources, the only hope of salvation lies in the people being kept fit to look after themselves.

(5) That foreigners, working as advisers or political officers concerned with the internal affairs of countries which are suspicious of external interference and are independently minded, must work and live as part of the people and consider things from the point of view of the people. They can be sure that by serving the interests of those among whom they work in this way they are also best serving the interests of their own country. A political officer must be able to interpret the people among whom he is working to his own Government and also be able to interpret his own Government to the people. The first requirement is often the more difficult.

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(6) That this type of work is not the function of an administrative officer nor of a foreign service officer, but of a specialist political officer or adviser.

(7) That in order to ensure the supply of the right kind of officer for work in the more backward protected areas or spheres of influence in the Middle East which are a British responsibility as well as for secondment to the more advanced Governments of the area which may ask for them, a special service with its own training and conditions is required.

(8) That financial assistance given to backward territories should usually be a free gift. If it is a loan it should not be accompanied by a demand for closer control. In other words the man who pays the piper should in this instance not insist on calling the tune. As regards advisers' salaries I am in favour of the borrowing Government paying a salary on a scale commensurate with what they pay other employees. I think this should make them feel more the employer of the adviser and would avoid jealousy of the adviser's high salary among his colleagues. The pay should be made up to what is necessary for the right man by His Majesty's Government.

One might add a further general conclusion. South-West Arabia—the Kingdom of the Yemen and the Aden Protectorate—is inevitably part of the Arab world, but it and South-East Arabia are far more backward than the northern Arab countries. Nevertheless they must eventually come into any picture of Arab unity, and I think that the methods of political development in the Hadramaut which may, one hopes, lead to a federation of the Hadhramaut States, will result in that area becoming more fit and more willing to come into schemes for Arab unity. Aden, apart from being an imperial fortress and a commercial centre, has willy-nilly played some sort of educational role in the area in the past and, if it developed as a cultural centre, that, too, would help the Yemen and the Protectorates further along the path to Arab unity.

I do not offer these conclusions in any dogmatic spirit but I have formed them in the course of a long experience of a particularly difficult area. I think they are justified from such success as has attended the methods used, by a falling back when other methods were attempted, and because I do not think they differ markedly from those reached by others, such as Brigadier Glubb, working on similar principles. We cannot expect to get on with these people, to be able to help them or to serve our own interests in the most satisfactory way—and there is no clash between British and local interests—unless we have the right type of people to work in the area.

These are not the only questions, of course. No matter how good the work on the spot may be, it must to some extent fall short if there is not a clearly defined policy from on high, and from many parts of the Middle East there are suggestions that policy is insufficiently defined. The area

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000 is capable of producing more unanswerable problems per day per square mile than any other in the world, and one wonders whether the machinery for producing the best answer possible is as good as can be designed. On the British side, for instance, one wonders whether it is good to have three Departments of State, apart from Service Departments, dealing with Middle East questions? And in international affairs would it be well to have some organization to consider matters in the area in which Great Powers are concerned? I do not attempt to answer these questions but in our own interests as well as those of the area I feel that they are matters which should if possible be settled now. If we have to wait until after the war so many more things will have to be dealt with that nobody will have time to deal with these.

I do not pretend that the organization of a Middle East service or that improving the machinery for dealing with Middle East problems at a higher level, are not matters presenting more difficulties than many of us who know only a few sides of a many-sided question can see, but it is certain that those who are concerned with the welfare of this area work with good will towards it and with faith and, if it is admitted, and I think it is admitted, that things could be done much better than they are, then one need not despair of improvements. I should like to end on this note with an extract from a letter written to me a year ago by a very distinguished visitor who was concerned with the area and who had spent a week or so seeing the Hadhramaut with me. I had asked him whether he thought the experiment of trying to build up an administration in such an unpromising and barren area was worth while.

> Indeed and indeed [he wrote] it is worth our going on with what has been begun. True, the Kathiris are a disappointment at present but in Mukalla and the Qu'aiti State you can see with your own eyes the fruit of the seed which has been planted. *Finis coronat opus.* But when is the end? It is not given to administrators, whether at home or in the lands overseas, to see the end of all their work. We move forward, sometimes groping and seeing as in a glass darkly, sometimes with a flash of vision clear as the "sun shining after rain." But we work in faith. And whatever the mistakes which will surely be made, none of us will have anything to reproach himself with, in looking back on the work of his life, if he has stood in the ways, and seen, and asked for the old paths, where is the good way and walked therein: just dealing, honesty of purpose and humanity—and the greatest of these is humanity.